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MESSAGE

PAGE 001

TO: 17 JUN 83

DIRECTOR

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BRIEF 17 DIRECTOR
TO: LATIN AMERICA BRIEF

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MESSAGE

LATIN AMERICA BRIEF FOR 17 JUNE.

FROM: DDI/O/CPAS.

CONTENTS:

CHILE: STRIKE BY COPPERWORKERS

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THE COPPERWORKERS' STRIKE TODAY PROTESTING THE ARREST OF UNION LEADER SEQUEL FOR SPONSORING PROTESTS ON TUESDAY PROBABLY WILL PROVOKE A FIRM RESPONSE BY THE GOVERNMENT AND BRING TENSIONS TO A NEW HIGH. THE UNION, WITH 23,000 MEMBERS, IS CHILE'S LARGEST. THE FOUR OTHER UNIONS THAT MAKE UP THE NATIONAL WORKERS' COMMAND ARE CONSIDERING WHETHER TO MAKE GOOD THEIR THREAT TO STRIKE IF ANY OF THEIR LEADERS WERE ARRESTED.

COMMENT: PRESIDENT PINOCHET IS LIKELY TO ARREST THE ORGANIZERS.. FIRE THE STRIKERS--EMPLOYEES AT ONE MINE WERE DISMISSED FOR STRIKING YESTERDAY--AND SEND THE ARMED SERVICES TO OCCUPY MINES. A WALKOUT BY THE OTHER UNIONS COULD SPREAD TO PROFESSIONAL AND POLITICAL GROUPS

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THAT SUPPORTED THE ANTIGOVERNMENT PROTESTS ON TUESDAY. A STATE OF EMERGENCY ALREADY IS IN EFFECT, AND, IF STRIKES SPREAD, THE GOVERNMENT PROBABLY WOULD DECLARE A STATE OF SIEGE. AS THE OPPOSITION GROWS, CONTROVERSY IN THE GOVERNMENT COULD DEVELOP-- PARTICULARLY WITHIN THE NATIONAL POLICE--OVER HANDLING THE UNREST AND THE TIMING OF THE TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY.

DECL OADR DRV LIA 2-83 [REDACTED]

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